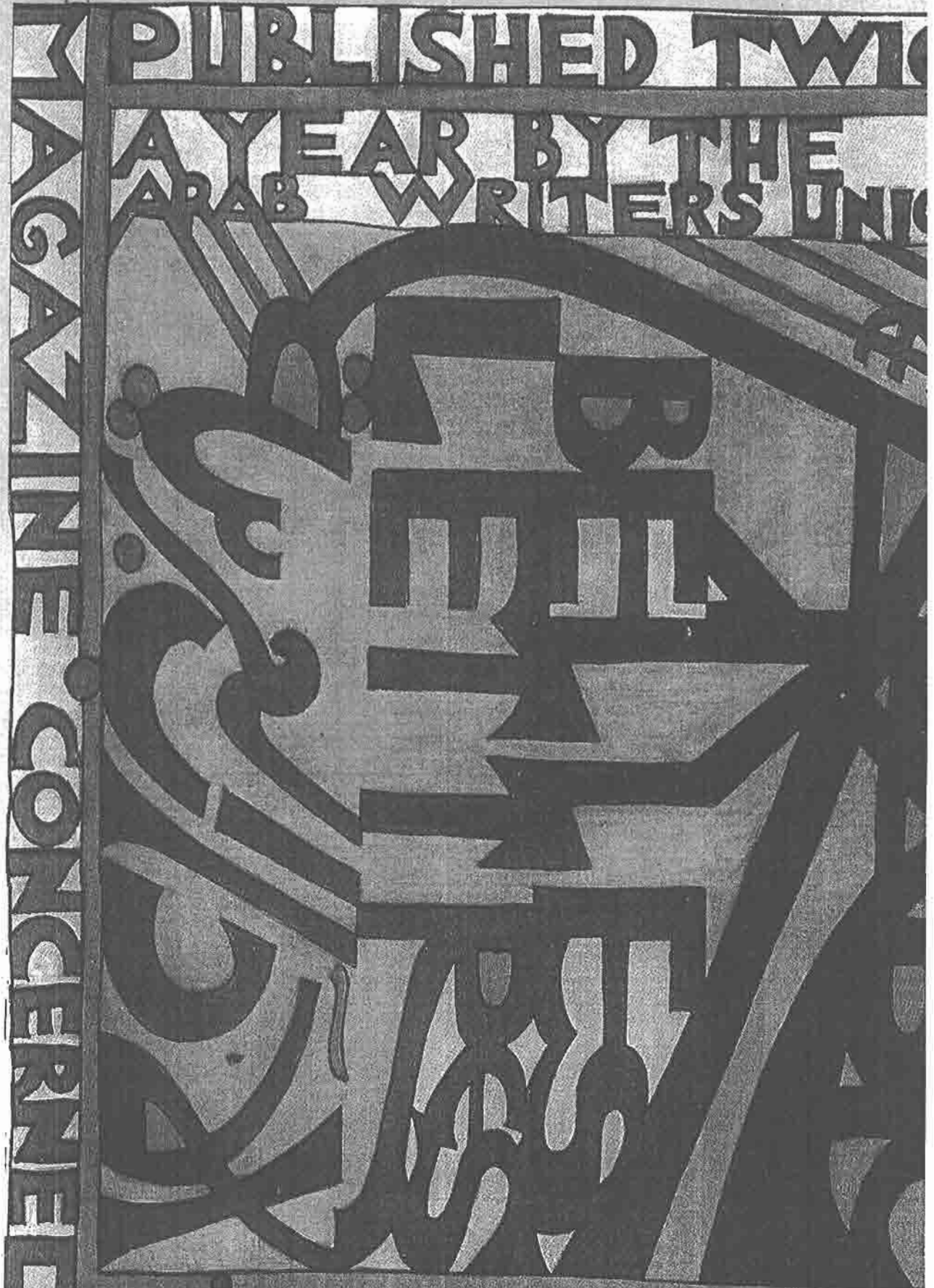


The Arabic Belles Lettres





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الدراسات
الغربية
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Notes From The Editor In Chief

In this issue of our newly born Magazine "*The Arabic Belles Lettres*" we offer the English speaking reader an opportunity to know and to enjoy certain creative productions of Arabic Literature.

Selected works are mainly drawn from Modern Arabic writers of Drama and Short Stories.

Our choice of the Short Play of Dr. Ali Okla Orsan was based on two accounts:

- *Firstly*: The play was written for broadcasting not stage acting. It is a radio's play depends on hearing effect in addition to its argument of social and ethical concepts.
- *Secondly*: The English reader will respond easily to the subject matter because the play deals with the woman status in Athens in the fifth century B.C. as Sophocles dealt with it

and Orsan compared this with the status of woman in the Arabic Culture.

Furthermore, Orsan's discussion with Sophocles about the Subject, demonstrates the interest of modern Arab Dramatist not only in the Technique of Drama but it also shows his overriding tendency towards the content of the Art of playwriting.

Through the woman's status matter is universal Orsan tactfully argued about the Subject from a comparative point of view.

The second aspect of this issue of *"The Arabic Belles Lettres"* revolves around poetry. We have chosen certain poems of Badr Shakir Al-Sayyab and Nizar Kabbani which are applicable to the painful tragedy of Baghdad in the present time.

Although the poems were written about Baghdad of their time around four or five decades ago, but they still express its catastrophe and sadness in the present as if the poems were composed today.

We also dedicated the third section of this issue to the Palestinian dream. We supported that with certain Stories inspired by the current Intifada and selected from Talaat Skairek's work.

These poems and the stories reflect the aspiration of the Holy Land in a dramatic situation.

Historians, as Sir Hamilton Gibb pointed out, do not write truly about history of any civilization because they were aware of the inner feelings and

thoughts of the people as expressed through Literature.

We salute Baghdad and we salute AlQuds in this issue, as elsewhere, to achieve Stability, Freedom and Peace not alienated from their dream as well as their identity of Arab Culture.

We also specified a reasonable space for love poetry, borrowing some fragments from The Book Of Al-Zuhra by Ibn Dawoud Al-Isfahani of Baghdad (869-910).

And, we turned around to the present and chose some poems of love by Abdu'l Qader Al-Hosni and Michael Eid. These contemporary poets, while dedicating their verses to love, they remain worthy of inheriting the tradition of Gazal or Love Poetry of their ancestors, and innovating their craft according to the modern standards of the art of poetry.

The woman who had the overture of the suspended odes still occupies the heart of the Modern Poem.

Finally, and in the fourth section of this issue, we offered the reader some critical studies, namely The Philosophical Novel by Dr. Nasri and The Search For Meaning and Technique in Modern Arabic Theatre by Dr. El Azma.



Variety of aspects of this issue emphasizes the common denominator of the creative vitality of the novelists, the poets and the Short Story tellers as well as the critics.

All express through their different Genres their experiences in an effective way, to reach out not only the Arab readers but also the men of letters everywhere.

Editor In Chief